

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-42 have been canceled. Claims 43-46 are pending.

In this Action, made final, the Examiner rejected claims 43-46 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. patent no. 6,424,980 (Iizuka et al.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Iizuka et al. represent the prior art referenced by applicants in their "Description of Related Art". On page 1, line 20, to page 2, line 7, applicants state:

Traditional techniques for solving this information gathering problem are typically based on knowledge of the structure used to arrange data within each specific website. (The structure used to arrange the data within a page is commonly referred to as the syntax of the page.) These techniques require prior determination of the syntax of each page and storage of syntax information about each page in a data storage device, such as a database.

When gathering information about a subject from a particular page, the traditional techniques identify the attributes of the subject by comparing the structure of the page with the stored structure information. When there is a match, the traditional technique returns the attribute value to the user.

These traditional techniques are limited because they can only gather attribute values from a page when they know the syntax of a page. To put it differently, the traditional techniques can only gather attribute values when the syntax of a page has been previously determined and stored.

Correspondingly, lizuka et al. state:

The apparatus has a HTML document storing unit for storing meta data about HTML documents. That meta data includes the locations, document structures, presentation locations, presentation styles, etc., of the HTML documents for each HTML document.... The document structure data of the HTML documents specifies the structures of partial structure such as tables, lists and clauses contained in the HTML documents and is used to map element data in the table and lists to items to be extracted.

(Col. 11, line 63, to col. 12, line 5)

In the preparatory phase, a managing person prepares meta data about HTML documents through the HTML document meta data manager before starting the execution phase.

(Col. 14, lines 30-32).

In other words, lizuka et al. require the syntax of documents that are to be searched to be known and stored before a search can be conducted.

In contrast, according to the claimed invention, data records within a file (e.g., a page or a document) are identified without using prior knowledge of the structure (e.g., syntax) of the file. (Page 2, lines 21-22) How this is accomplished is recited in claim 43, lines 3-19, and in claim 46, lines 3-17. lizuka et al. have no corresponding disclosure, because in the system of lizuka et al., the data records within files are pre-identified by the meta-data that is pre-stored in, e.g., tables 152 and 153. (See, e.g., lizuka et al. Figs. 12 and 13, and col. 14, lines 17-21.) lizuka et al. thus have no need for the functionality recited in claims 43-46. And, in fact, lizuka et al. do not disclose, teach, or suggest that functionality.

The Examiner asserted that “lizuka discloses identifying potential locations of values of record fields in the text in Figure 8 at reference signs

S200.” The Examiner is mistaken. This step of Fig. 8 refers to determining the addresses (locations) of documents that are to be searched -- see col. 14, lines 47-51. In contrast, the claim language refers to identifying locations within a document (text) that is being searched.

The Examiner further asserted that “lizuka discloses identifying a region of interest in the text by applying candidate region partitions and segmenting the region of interest into record regions that contain data for a single record,” and pointed to lizuka’s description of Ashish and Knoblock’s technique at col. 2, lines 45-65, as supporting this assertion. The Examiner is again mistaken. The prior-art technique identifies the regions (the internal structure) of a text (document). But it does not identify a region of interest among the regions of the text. Nor does it identify a region by applying, evaluating, and selecting as recited in the “identifying” step of applicants’ claims. The technique also segments the text (document) in the sense that it identifies its portions. But it does not segment the region of interest. Nor does it effect segmentation by applying, evaluating, selecting, applying and extracting as recited in the “segmenting” step of applicants’ claims.

In view of the above explanations, it should be evident that lizuka et al. do not render applicants’ claims unpatentable. Applicants therefore request that the Section 102(e) rejection of their claims over lizuka et al. be withdrawn.

The claim rejection having been properly addressed and disposed of, applicants respectfully suggest that the application is now in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore request that the application be reconsidered and thereafter be passed to issue.

Applicants believe the foregoing to be dispositive of the issues in the application. But if the Examiner deems that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution, then applicants request the Examiner to call their attorney at the telephone number listed below.

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Response Dated 27 November 2007

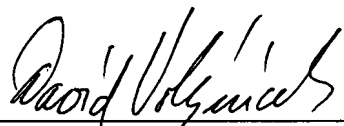
Reply to Office Action of October 17, 2007

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.116 – EXPEDITED

PROCEDURE – EXAMINING GROUP No.: 2178

Respectfully submitted,

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